

# COBBETT'S WEEKLY REGISTER.

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TO THE

BISHOP OF LONDON.

*On the Charge, lately delivered by him, and published in the Newspapers of the 27th of August 1822.*

Kensington, 10 Sept. 1822.

BISHOP,

THE above-mentioned paper, called a *Charge*, contains, in my opinion, matter that ought to be commented on and exposed; and, as it is probable, that no other person will do this, I think proper to do it. If, in doing it, I treat you with very little ceremony, pray ascribe it to the right cause; namely, that I think very little ceremony is due to you. After Father in God Prettyman's *History of the Life of Pitt*; after

that dish of *detestable politics* from the pen of a Bishop; and, after something more recent, I can see no special privilege that *Bishops* have, when they become *authors*, and particularly when they meddle with *politics*, as you do in the paper on which I am about to remark. We know, that it is a rule of law, that the *King* can do *no wrong*; and we have heard a *hypocritical and base sycophant* extend this maxim, which only means that the King is not personally responsible for the wrong that may be done in his name; we have heard a *detestable old hypocrite* extend this maxim even to the private actions of the King, and shamelessly assert, that he could not do any thing *vicious* or *foolish*. This *despicable parasite* might, perhaps, be ready to tell us, that

X

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*Bishops*, especially as they “re-  
ceive the Holy Ghost” at their  
consecration, cannot possibly  
commit either *wickedness* or *folly*;  
but, while we have recently had a  
most satisfactory proof that they  
can commit the former, I shall,  
I think, before I have finished this  
Letter, pretty satisfactorily show,  
that it is within the compass of  
possibility that they may commit  
the latter.

That which I have before me,  
from the newspapers as above-  
mentioned, is only a part of the  
Charge, which is said to have  
been delivered to your Clergy in  
July last; but, it appears to be  
that part, in which alone the *pub-  
lic* have any interest. It gives us  
your view of the means to be  
made use of by the Clergy, or  
*Parsons* (for that is the proper  
word), to maintain an influence  
over the minds of the people.  
You say not a word about their  
keeping possession of the im-  
mense revenue they now enjoy;  
though, I do assure you, that I  
am not going to be fool enough to

argue the question as if I deemed  
this revenue to be a thing wholly  
out of your mind!

It is very clear to every man of  
any extent of understanding as  
to public matters, in this country,  
that this revenue is not likely to  
remain long what it now is. To  
touch the *Debt*, to lay even the  
little finger on it; to touch the  
soundest and most unbroken skin  
of *Waterloo*; to take from any  
branch whatever, is impossible,  
without touching, and pretty  
sharply touching, this revenue.  
Priests, never the last to perceive  
danger, when it menaces their  
own possessions, have hardly fail-  
ed to see this as clearly as it is  
seen by other people. At such a  
time, therefore, what they say  
upon the means of maintaining  
their influence is important to the  
public at large; and especially if  
they put forth political doctrines  
such as those which we find in  
the Charge of London's Right  
Reverend Father in God.

Before I proceed further, I  
shall, according to my invariable,

and, I trust, honourable, custom, insert, at full length, the part of your Charge, on which I am going to remark. The reader will then have both sides fairly before him.

1. "We live at one of those remarkable periods, which constitute eras in the history of the world. For a series of years preceding the French Revolution, the diffusion of knowledge and cultivation of intellect in France, and the neighbouring countries, exceeded in such a proportion the counterbalancing powers of religion and morality, that all competent judges, acquainted with the state of society, agreed in opinion that some mighty convulsion was at hand. Of the disasters which followed that dreadful event, and the shock which it gave to the civil and religious institutions of the continent, it is altogether superfluous to speak. But whilst the world was involved in confusion around us, this country, by the blessing of PROVIDENCE, was not only preserved from destruction, but rose to an eminence of glory and power, which it had never attained in former times. In reasoning on the causes of this difference in our favour, we are justified, I trust, in ascribing our safety to the quantity of virtue and good sense produced in the country by the free constitution of our Government, the equal administration of our laws, the principles which regulate our seminaries for the education of youth, and, above all, to the prevalence of a sound, a pure, a reasonable Religion, dispensed and administered by a body of Clergy, who, from their external condition, and still more from their learning and piety, have an influence on the minds of the people, not only through the medium of their

pastoral functions, but by the effect of their writings, and the estimation which they bear in the community. The immediate danger is now past: but when we direct our attention to the systematic culture of intellect introduced in the course of a few years among all classes, we cannot but feel an anxiety lest the balance of society should suffer disturbance from this sudden increase of its momentum. In proportion as these additional energies imparted to the mass of the people are under the direction of good principles, they will give stability to the Government, advance the cause of religion and morals, and contribute to the general advantage. But there is no necessary connexion between knowledge and goodness, between the possession of intellectual power, and a disposition to apply it to its proper ends. Its legitimate use may exalt us to heights of civilization and happiness, as much above our present condition, as that condition exceeds the state of society at the commencement of the fifteenth century; its abuse may be fatal to our existing establishments, may demolish the bulwarks of strength and security, erected by the wisdom of our ancestors, and consolidated during a succession of ages, by their continued labours. The enemies of religion and order are so well aware of these consequences, that, while they profess an earnest desire to enlighten the people, they encourage that mode of instruction alone, which instils no fixed principles of religion, no preference to any form of worship. It therefore must be our object, on the other hand, to maintain the proposition which should always exist between the active powers of the public mind, and the control and direction of their exercise by the operation of moral causes. And this we must do, not by discouraging the acquisition of knowledge or the cultivation of under-

standing, among the lower orders, but by taking effectual methods to supply their minds with just notions of their duty towards God and man, and place them under the habitual direction of sound principles and good feelings. I need not inform you, my Reverend Brethren, that this is our peculiar province, and that the filial attachment, which is manifested by so many wise and virtuous persons, to the Church and the Clergy, is founded in a rational persuasion of the superior excellence of our national faith and worship, and of the benefits derived to the country from the ability and zeal of its Ministers. I have adverted above to the influence of the Clergy as one of the principal causes which ensured the safety of the nation, amidst the extremes of confusion and anarchy which agitated the neighbouring countries: and I cannot but think that any material diminution of that influence, which is essential to the success of their exertions, and of course still more its extinction, would produce, at no great distance of time, the most injurious consequences both to the Church and State. Their weight in society of course will depend on the estimation in which their character is held, and on the manner in which they discharge their duties. Allow me to call your attention to these two points.

2. "The Laity have a right to expect that the attainments, in learning and piety, of the Clergy, considered as a body, should rise, at the least, above the ordinary level of other classes of society. Such comparative excellence I believe to have been found in every country where the discipline or doctrine of the Church has been maintained in tolerable purity. I even think it essential to the continued existence of any religious establishment. It was one of the most efficient causes of that respect for the sacred order, which occasioned our gradual ad-

vance in riches and power, and was long retained amidst gross abuses of both, in the middle ages. If, in that period of darkness, ecclesiastics were licentious and illiterate, the body of the people was still more deeply immersed in vice and ignorance. It is true, that the scandal occasioned by the remissness of discipline, and the immoralities which infected the Church, undermined by degrees the foundations of the ecclesiastical power, and at length brought about the Reformation. Yet it does not appear that the clergy in that day were less respectable in attainments or morals than in several preceding centuries. The number of ecclesiastics distinguished by learning and sanctity who respectively supported the Reformation, or adhered to the Church of Rome, abundantly proves the contrary. But of the general improvement which took place in society at the revival of letters, the largest proportion had fallen to the share of the Laity; the Clergy, from various causes, were not benefited in an equal degree: and from this alteration in their relative circumstances, and its effect on the feelings of the public, they necessarily lost the ascendancy, which had been preserved without difficulty by their less meritorious predecessors in a darker age. In referring to these historical facts, it is simply my object to urge the necessity of maintaining our proper position in relation to the mass of society; to press the important truth, that, if other classes advance in knowledge, intelligence, virtue, and piety, and the Clergy, whatever are their positive merits in all these respects, continue stationary, they are placed on a different level in regard to their flocks, and will suffer a proportionate loss in their credit and weight with the public, and consequently in their professional utility. It is incumbent on us to advance with the progress of the times; and every indi-



vidual should act as if the whole interest of religion depended on his personal character, and the faithful exertion of his powers within his allotted sphere. In all ranks of society are numbers of persons who are qualified to judge of our learning, of the soundness of our doctrine, and the efficiency of our instructions, and who regard with disgust even the slightest inattention to duty, or impropriety of moral conduct. *And far be it from us to consider this as an evil.* If such conscientious censors had the direction of public opinion, their honest inspection would be of the greatest advantage to all classes of men, and, without offence be it said, to the Clergy. *But where knowledge is extensively spread, the power it gives will be often exerted detrimentally.* Even the spirit of piety will sometimes act on erroneous views; will be found in combination with attachment to party, which gives an obliquity to its motions, or defeat its own intentions by an alliance with enthusiasm or folly.

3. "It is not easy to calculate the multiplied difficulties which, from these and similar causes, increase on the Clergyman, as the world advances in knowledge, and create a corresponding necessity of discretion in his conduct, and energy in the discharge of his duties. There have, perhaps, been times in the Church, when reverence to official station might protect the infirmity, or throw a veil over the failings of the Minister: *but now, when he is subjected at every step to the scrutiny of inquisitive malice; when opposition is created to his honest endeavours to be useful, from so many various causes; when the establishment of a school, or the enlargement of a church, is resisted by one man from some wretched political prejudice, by another through caprice or perverseness, and by a third in resentment*

*for some fancied neglect, which disposes him to mortify the pastor in the tenderest point by defeating his schemes for the benefit of his flock, we see how great the necessity of the utmost assistance which personal qualifications can lend to his sacred function. But if the Minister has on the one side to contend with the opposition of adversaries, he is assailed on the other by the injudicious zeal of real or apparent friends; who, pursuing beneficial objects without due regard to the means which they employ, or sacrificing general principles to the prospect of some immediate good, are disposed to accuse him of indifference, or bigotted attachment to forms, if, through regard to good order or apprehension of distant consequences, he refuses to co-operate in their favourite schemes. In the midst of these difficulties our only real security will be found in a fixed resolution to act in every instance on deliberate views of duty, and a sincere and sober love of truth, under a controlling sense of that Supreme Authority, from which we derive our commission, as the guides and teachers of our brethren. The natural tendency of these principles to enlighten and tranquillize the mind, affords the strongest of safe-guards as well against error and indiscretion (more frequently the effects of some undue bias on the affections, than of natural weakness of judgment) as against the transports of passion, which irritate, offend, and disgust, and produce lasting resentments and divisions. A Clergyman who acts on these motives, will have the advantage of moving with authority, dignity, and freedom; he will retain his influence over his friends, though he may refuse compliance with their prejudices; *he will treat the gainsayer with kindness, whilst he exposes the unsoundness of his principles; and will show courtesy and friendliness to the dis-**

sender, without being supposed to approve his errors. The general rule of his proceedings will be, to "*overcome evil with good*," by conciliation to all men, as far as it is consistent with the interests of truth, and that enlightened attachment which he feels to the Church, from a thorough persuasion that the best interests of religion are concerned in its stability, and that no particular advantage which can be expected from popular favour, or the exertions of irregular piety, would counterbalance the evils arising from the neglect of its discipline and ordinances, or the diminution of its salutary influence. This, I conceive, is the genuine liberality, which is the grace and ornament of the true Christian: a virtue, as far removed from indifference, as from the contentious spirit which assumes the disguise of zeal. The sentiment *misnamed liberality*, which looks with equal approbation on every sect that professes Christianity, is, in its most innocent form, a *low and contemptible vanity*; it is more frequently, perhaps, a profligate indifference to religion, or insidious hostility intending its ruin, by depressing the established Church. But true liberality is firm in its own principles, while it looks *with indulgence* on the mistaken views of others; and never approaches so near to perfection, as in union with zeal, under the direction of *charity* and prudence. It would ill deserve the character of a Christian virtue, if it could lend its countenance, however indirectly, to error or falsehood, or shrink from the defence of truth."

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Here is my matter, Bishop; and now I shall proceed to *deal* with it in the manner that I think it calls for. The *French Revolu-*

*tion* has been such a famous stalking-horse for so many years; has so long been so useful to the parsons of all degrees, that it would have been a wonder indeed if you had not brought it forth upon this occasion, though a very little reflection might have taught you, that you ought to have avoided it.

You here tell us that the French Revolution was occasioned by the parsons not having kept sufficiently in advance of the people of France with regard to *knowledge*; that is to say, with regard to knowledge to be acquired from books. This is one of your assertions. Another is, that a Revolution has been prevented in England by the parsons having maintained their proper place; that is to say, by their being in advance of the people in point of *knowledge* of the sort just spoken of.

These are your two principal positions. They form the foundation of all that follows; and I undertake to prove them both to be *false*. But before I go into this

proof, let me ask how this doctrine of yours agrees with the doctrines of the Christian religion; with the doctrines; or, perhaps, maxims, laid down by Christ himself. Did he depend on the *erudition*, or *cunning*, of the teachers, for the success of that doctrine, which he was teaching? On the contrary, did he not say that it was from the mouths of *babes* and *sucklings*; that is to say, from persons of the simplest understandings and manners, and most unostentatious dress and appearance, that he expected his gospel to be spread abroad with success? Did he choose, for his Apostles, men with immense estates, scores of manors, scores of gamekeepers, and with apparel the most sumptuous that can be conceived? Did he ever say or ever insinuate, that the success of his saving word depended upon the teachers of it having palaces for their places of residence; having parks well stocked with deer; having retinues of servants equal in number

to one or more troops of horse; having kitchens, the fumes of which give an odour to the atmosphere, and gardens, coming up to Mahomet's idea of Elysium; did he ever say or insinuate, that it was necessary, in order to make his word successful, that it should be taught by men, dressed in lawn and lolling in coaches drawn by six horses? You know well, that he chose for his Apostles twelve men, from amongst the lowest of mankind; from amongst fishermen and labourers; and that, when he sent them forth at last, he charged them to take neither staff nor scrip; but to depend for their very subsistence upon what the faithful might choose to bestow upon them. Upon this condition it was that he promised to be with them always, even unto the end of the world.

But you; what do you say? Why, that the parsons must depend for success upon their being more *learned*, more knowing, more *clever* than the rest of the community. You seem to forget all

about the promise of Christ *to be with his Apostles to the end of the world*, to guide and to sustain them in the performance of their labours. The staff and the scrip precept appears to have wholly escaped your recollection, as does also the reliance for support upon the piety of those to whom the Apostles were to preach. Your idea is that of a very different sort of apostles, and of very different means for their obtaining and securing an influence over the minds of the people. You seem to place very little reliance, if any at all, on that *spirit*, which we are every where told (from one end of the New Testament to the other) is to be the *sole* guide, comforter and sustainer of the preachers of the word. You go so far as to say, at the beginning of the second paragraph above quoted, that the "*attainments in learning and piety of the Clergy*" must rise above the ordinary level of other classes of society. You say, "I even think it essential to "*the continued existence of any*

*"religious establishment."* What, Bishop? Do you think that Christ's promise, to sustain the teachers of his word, was a false promise? You do, indeed, talk about *piety*, as amongst the attainments; but it is only in conjunction with *learning*; and, indeed, the latter is considered by you manifestly as superior in point of importance to the former. You do not think that any religious establishment can *exist* for any length of time, without these *attainments in learning*. I believe, that the *establishment* that you have particularly in your eye cannot long exist in its present form, let the attainments of the parsons be what they may; but, at any rate, you here give up the great ground of reliance for stability; namely, the essential excellence of the doctrines of Christianity themselves, and the promised spirit of Christ to animate and uphold the teachers of his Word.

Leaving you to reconcile these opinions of yours with the teach-

ing of Christ and his Apostles, let me now come to your two principal positions, before mentioned.

We shall, probably, discover a *motive* for your ascribing the *French Revolution* to the circumstance, that the other classes in France had advanced in knowledge at a greater rate than the parsons had. But, such is your assertion; and now let us see how that assertion agrees with the truth. On whose authority shall we rely here? I do not ask you to rely upon mine; and I think that this honest and impartial public will not ask me to rely upon yours. It will, I presume, be deemed perfectly reasonable to take it for granted, that the *French people themselves* were no bad judges of their own condition, and of the grounds, upon which they proceeded in demanding a *change*, or, if you will have it so, a *Revolution*. I am not going to appeal to the allegations made by the Revolutionists, after they had deposed the King, and scattered the parsons abroad; I am not going

to appeal to any publication that was made after the tithes were abolished; no, nor to any one that was made after the first thought appeared to have been entertained of a suppression of any part of the nobility, or of any branch belonging to either of the orders of the State; I am going to appeal to the representations, made to the States-General by the people, of all classes, upon the first meeting of that body, in those papers, which were called the *Cahiers*, or *Memorials*.

In these, from one end of the kingdom to the other, the people cried aloud against the oppressions, not of the Royal Family only, but of the *nobles* and the *clergy*. They showed, in innumerable instances, how they were oppressed by these orders; they showed that to live under them was a most horrible slavery; they showed that in an endless number of instances, the clergy were the *lords of manors*, the granters of leases, the demanders of fines and quit-rents, and



that they were the rivals of the noblesse in grinding the farmers, the tradesmen, the labourers and the mechanics to the earth. Mr. ARTHUR YOUNG says, that the tyranny, practised by these hodies was insupportable; and he adds, that, when we take a view of this tyranny, it will “ scarcely “ be attempted to be urged, that “ a Revolution was not absolutely “ necessary to the welfare of the “ kingdom.” In another part of his book, Mr. YOUNG, who wrote, you will observe, in 1789; that is to say, before the commencement of the Revolution, but after the common people had committed some violences on their oppressors, imputes those violences to the oppressors, and not to the people. “ The murder, says he, of a Seigneur, “ or a Chateau in flames, is recorded in every newspaper; “ the rank of the person who suffers attracts notice; but where “ do we find the register of that “ Seigneur’s oppressions of his “ peasantry, and his exactions

“ of fendal services, from those “ whose children were dying “ around them for want of bread? “ Who has dwelt sufficiently in “ explaining all the ramifications “ of despotism, legal, aristocratical, and ecclesiastical, pervading the whole mass of the “ people; reaching like a circulating fluid, the most distant “ capillary tubes of poverty and “ wretchedness?”

Here, Bishop of London; here, Right Reverend Father in God, we have a much better account of the *causes* of the French Revolution than that which you have been pleased to give us, in your Charge to the Clergy of your Diocese. You ascribe the Revolution to the clergy of France; that is to say, to the bishops and parsons not having kept far enough in advance of the people with regard to intellectual attainments; but here we have the proof, under the hands and seals of the people themselves, that they had no complaint to make against their clergy, on

the score of a *want of learning* in the latter; but a great deal of complaint to make against them on the score of a want of justice and mercy; no complaint at all had the French people to make, that their clergy were behind them, as men of learning; but that they were far before all other men except the aristocracy in greediness and insolence and want of feeling. This doctrine of yours is by no means any thing *new*. It has been held by the whole of your cloth, and by all the supporters of the present system, and by all the enemies of Reform in England, from the very dawn of the French Revolution to this day. None of these have ever, at any period, been willing to allow that the Revolution arose out of the oppressions of the Government, the Aristocracy and the Church. Though it is well known that there was not one single district; not one single division of a province in France, that did not send the most pressing remonstrances against the cruelties

inflicted on the people; though it is notorious, that the complaints against the lords of manors, against the merciless clergy, against the cruelty of the taxing laws, against the abominations of the Game Laws; against the base partialities and crying injustice of the courts called Courts of Justice; though this is as notorious as seat-selling, which we all know to be as notorious as the sun at noon-day; notorious as all this is, still, from the dawn of the French Revolution to the present hour, that grand, that glorious event has been ascribed, by all the parties above-mentioned, aided by our servile and infamous press, to the writings of Voltaire and other men, stigmatised as Philosophers and Infidels; or, in your way of stating it, to the diffusion of knowledge and cultivation of intellect in France, with which the *clergy did not keep pace!* In answer to this, Sir Francis Burdett once very well observed: "*Philosophy, alas! has no such triumph*

“to boast of: the triumph be-  
 “longs, exclusively, to *Oppres-*  
 “*sion*. It is to the rude hand  
 “of the latter, and not to the  
 “voice of the former, that we  
 “owe that Revolution, which  
 “will never cease to move on,  
 “until it shall have utterly de-  
 “stroyed that by the cruelty and  
 “insolence of which it has been  
 “put in motion.”

Read that sentence ten times  
 over, Bishop. Never mind its  
 coming from a Jacobin. Ponder  
 on it well, Bishop, and lay aside  
 your own miserable theory. Let  
 the whole of the Aristocracy and  
 the Church think well upon it;  
 and it may, possibly, still prevent  
 that which it seems at this mo-  
 ment impossible to prevent. I  
 quote the Baronet from memory;  
 and I am not quite sure as to the  
 scene, where he uttered the sen-  
 timent; but, let it have been at a  
 Tavern Dinner if you will, Bi-  
 shop, the words are better worthy  
 your attention, and of that of your  
 clergy, too, than any thing con-  
 tained in any Charge or any Ser-

mon, that you have either uttered  
 or heard in the whole course of  
 your life.

Your assertion respecting the  
 cause of the French Revolution,  
 I have, I think, answered, and  
 shown to be false; but before I  
 proceed to the other assertion, it  
 may not be amiss to add, that  
 Mr. ARTHUR YOUNG, in speaking  
 of the oppressions of the clergy  
 in France, has the following pas-  
 sage, by no means unworthy of  
 your attention. “In regard to  
 “the oppressions of the clergy,  
 “as to tithes, I must do that body  
 “a justice, to which a claim  
 “cannot be laid in England.  
 “Though the ecclesiastical tenth  
 “was levied in France more se-  
 “verely than usual in Italy, yet  
 “was it never exacted with such  
 “*horrid greediness as is at pre-*  
 “*sent the disgrace of England.*  
 “When taken in kind, no such  
 “thing was known in any part of  
 “France, where I made enquiries,  
 “as a tenth: it was always a  
 “twelfth, or a thirteenth, or even  
 “a twentieth of the produce.

" And in no part of the kingdom  
 " did a new article of culture pay  
 " any thing : thus *turnips, cab-*  
 " *ages, clover, chicorée, potatoes,*  
 " &c. &c. *paid nothing.* In  
 " many parts, *meadows were ex-*  
 " *empt.* Silk - worms nothing.  
 " Olives in some places paid—  
 " in more they did not. *Cows*  
 " *nothing.* Lambs from the twelfth  
 " to the twenty-first. *Wool no-*  
 " *thing.* — Such mildness in the  
 " levy of this odious tax, is *abso-*  
 " *lutely unknown in England.*"

Bishop, do you not begin to  
 think, that it would have been as  
 well to let the French Revolution  
 alone? The writer whom I am  
 quoting here, was long, and at  
 last died, *Secretary of the Board*  
*of Agriculture*; and, so far from  
 being what is now-a-days, im-  
 pudently called a "*blasphemer,*"  
 he was a man remarkable for his  
 religious piety. You see, then,  
 that this French Revolution had  
 a cause; a real and efficient  
 cause, of which you have chosen  
 to say not one word: and now let  
 us proceed to your second asser-

tion, which we shall, I think, find  
 to be, upon the score of falsehood,  
 equal to the former.

It is this: that this country,  
 while the world was involved in  
 confusion around us, "was not  
 " only preserved *from destruc-*  
 " *tion,* but rose to an eminence of  
 " glory and power, which it had  
 " never attained in former times."

It will be hardly necessary for me  
 to do it, but I may, by-and-by,  
 say a word or two about this glory  
 and power, and about the "*de-*  
 "*struction*" that you here mani-  
 festly have in view, and which  
 you must necessarily mean to  
 say has been experienced by  
 France. These things reserved  
 for another part of my Letter, let  
 me proceed. You say that this  
 nation was *preserved* by the  
 " quantity of *virtue and good*  
 "*sense*" that existed in the coun-  
 try; that these were produced by  
 the "*free Constitution of our*  
 "*Government*;" by the "*equal*  
 "*administration of our laws*;" by  
 the principles which regulate the  
 " Seminaries for the education of

our youth; but *above all*" (this is the main thing that you rest upon), "*above all* to the religion administered by a *body of clergy*, "who, from their *external condition*, and, still more from their *learning* and piety, have an influence on the *minds* of the people, not only through the medium of their *pastoral functions*, but by the effect of their *writings*, and the *estimation* they bear in the *community*."

What does this fairly mean?

As to the *free* Constitution of Government and the *equal* administration of the laws, and the principles of the people at Oxford and Cambridge, I may allude to all these by-and-by; though really after the affair so recently the subject of public interest and discussion, it would hardly seem necessary. It is your last *cause of preservation* that is most worthy of our attention. Here you assert that the *main-cause* of revolution having been prevented here (for that is your meaning), was the *influence of the Parsons*

*of the Church upon the minds of the people*. This is the assertion, to which I beg the public to attend. I shall afterwards have to show, that (to use the elegant expression of Castlereagh) "people ought not to hollow before they are out of the wood." But, allowing; indeed, the thing is notorious; that all change; that all revolution; that all *reform*; granted that this was prevented, I am about to show that it is false to impute the prevention to the *influence of the parsons over the minds of the people*.

You are not aware, perhaps, that you and your parsons have two mighty rivals here. The Knights of Waterloo insist that it was they that saved the nation from what you called "destruction." If they did not, I am sure we have paid, and are paying enormous sums of money into wrong hands. The "DEAD WEIGHT," as it is now elegantly termed in the official papers laid before Parliament, amounts to 5,315,692*l.* 9*s.* 7*d.*; that is to



say, five millions three hundred and fifteen thousand, six hundred and ninety-two pounds, nine shillings and sevenpence. — There you see; that is what we pay for the dead weight created by the war to prevent our destruction. I will say nothing at present, about the six hundred millions of debt, due to 'Change Alley; and the hundred millions of debt (for it grows out of the same cause), in the shape of poor rates. I will say nothing about these; but, for the present, refer you solely to the "DEAD WEIGHT;" and I repeat, that, if we owe our preservation to the *parsons*, this dead weight money would appear to be given for nothing; and the *parsons* ought to put in their claim to it.

However, you have another *stout rival*, in this claim to the honour of having preserved the nation from "*destruction*;" namely, the BANK! Until 1819 the people had always been taught to look to the army as the defenders and saviours of the nation. I,

indeed, had always contended, that the French had been defeated by paper-money; and when it was proposed to erect monuments and triumphal arches, I said that they ought to be dedicated to the Bank and the paper-money makers generally; and that, if possible, the materials should be paper. In 1819, Sir ROBERT PEEL put in the claim of the Bank, in a formal, if not an official manner. The Bank Directors themselves broadly hinted, that it was they who had gained the victory; that it was they who had preserved the country from "*destruction*;" but Sir ROBERT PEEL made the claim in direct terms. He said, on the 18th of May 1819, "As an *Englishman*, he could not " but feel the *services* rendered " to the country by the Bank. " Through *its means* the country " was enabled to pass success- " fully through all its difficulties, " to terminate a long and arduous " struggle with glory, and to give " *security and independence to* " *Europe*."

Thus, then, we have seen, that first the army, and then the Bank claimed the merit of that *preservation* and that glory of which you talk, and the claim to the merit of having effected which you now put in so boldly on behalf of the parsons. How will you settle the account with these two rivals? The army has been *paid* pretty decently; nor has the Bank gone *unpaid*. We shall see by-and-by, perhaps, that the parsons have had a little *payment* as well as the others; but, before we come to that part of the subject, let us return and stick a little closer to this assertion of yours, which I have declared to be *false*.

It is true that the parsons, the Bank, and the army, all had a hand in preserving us from "*destruction*;" that is to say, from *Parliamentary Reform*; for as to any other sort of "*destruction*," from which we have been preserved, we may defy you to point it out. I agree, then, that the parsons had their full share in those acts, which prevented a change. But I deny, that the change was prevented, by any *influence*, exercised by *any body* over the "*MINDS* of the people." The change was prevented by means very different indeed from that of influence over the

public *mind*. If it was effected by the parsons; by their "*learning and piety*;" by their "*writings*;" by the *estimation* which they bore in the community: if this was the case, will you be so good as to tell us, Bishop, what was the use of a hundred and fifty thousand men in arms, kept on foot in these islands during the war; what was the use of proclamations to suppress writings in favour of the French Revolution; what was the use of prosecutions innumerable of writings in favour of Reform here; what was the use of transporting the leaders of the Scotch Reformers to Botany Bay; and what was the use of new Treason and Sedition Bills, of several new laws to cramp the press; and what was the use of a seven years' suspension of the Act of Habeas Corpus, and a Bill of Indemnity to those who had been guilty of violations of the law during the suspensions of that Act? What was the use of all these, Bishop? If those of your cloth; if the parsons by their learning and piety, and by the effect of their writings, and the estimation they were held in by the community; if, by these means, the parsons had such a saving influence over the *minds* of the people, be so good as to tell us, Bishop, why

the Government resorted to all these restraints upon their bodies?

But, was there nothing more? Nothing but the spiritual influence, except the few trifling things that I have just mentioned? Was there no "*Loyal Association*," at the Crown and Anchor in the Strand, of which Mr. REEVES, then Chief Justice of Newfoundland, was Chairman, and which Association was entitled, "*against Republicans and Levellers*," and which Association notoriously, openly, and boastingly, employed spies and informers? Was there nothing of this sort, and if there was, with what propriety do you boast, that it was the influence of your parsons over the minds of the people, that effected, what you call preservation from "*destruction*," and which other people call a prevention of Reform?

If the thing; if the mighty good were effected by the influence of your parsons over the minds of the people, whence the necessity of arming loyal associations of Yeomanry, to *keep the disaffected in awe*? Whence the necessity of *barracks* near every populous town in the kingdom; whence the necessity of magazines of arms and ammunition and of troops stationed at convenient distances, through-

out the whole of the interior of the kingdom? Could the immense magazines at WELDON in Northamptonshire be necessary for defence of the country *against the French*? Was there danger that the French Sans Culottes would land at WELDON, at Manchester, at Chelmsford or at Guildford? If your parsons had made all secure by the influence which their "*learning and piety*" had given them over the minds of the people, how came it to be necessary to bring a *German army into the heart of England*; to keep it here till the very close of the war; to give the chief command of districts of England to German Generals, putting English regiments, militia as well as regulars under their command? If the influence over the English mind given to the parsons by their learning and piety; if this were sufficient, why were German troops brought to the town of Ely to superintend the flogging of the English Local Militia-men? If this blessed influence were sufficient for the purpose of leading the people willingly along, why was the nation saddled with the enormous expense of a German army; the half-pay of which, Bishop, now costs this nation, according to the

statement in the account of the "DEAD WEIGHT," *one hundred and fourteen thousand, eight hundred and seventy pounds a year?*

That the parsons acted their part, I am the last man in the world to deny; but, it was not through the means of an influence over the MIND. From the moment that the war commenced, a very considerable part of them became *very active* indeed; and it did not surprise some persons a little to see them so zealous, in a war against a people, whose principal crime seemed to be the having cast off a religion, or, rather, idolatry, at the head of which was *Anti-Christ*, as those parsons had always told us. However, as I have very lately, in my letter to the *Hampshire Parsons*, fully explained this matter, I shall not go into it again here. It was not with *the word*, but with the *magistrate's power*; the civil power, occasionally aided by the military; the civil power, occasionally assisted by *Dragoons*, that the parsons were most efficient in effecting what you call our preservation from "DESTRUCTION." To enumerate only a thousandth part of the instances, in which they exercised an *influence of this sort*,

would require a very large volume. To deny their efficiency in preserving us from "*destruction*" would be impudent indeed, when scarcely a week has passed for the last *thirty years*, without our reading in the newspapers of some Reverend person or other, who has been engaged (either in England or in Ireland) in the coercing of "*sedition libellers*," or in marching at the head of troops to suppress *rioters and rebels*! Two memorable instances occur to me at this moment; two memorable instances of their "*influence*;" but, Father in God, was it an influence over the MIND, which *Parson Hay* exercised at *Manchester*; or that the *Reverend Sir Henry Bate Dudley, Bart.*, exercised, at the head of a detachment of *Dragoons*, in the Isle of Ely?

Are you tired, Bishop? If you are not, I am; and I now leave the public to judge, whether that which you call a preservation from destruction, and which I call a prevention of re'orm was effected by an influence over the *mind*, or by an influence over the *body*; and whether, as far as the parsons were concerned, that which was effected, was effected by means of their *learning* and *piety*, and by means of the

estimation in which they were held by the community.

Here I should put an end to my letter, having done quite enough to satisfy the ends of justice in this case. But I am not inclined to pass in silence over this preservation from "des ruination." You say, that it would be superfluous to speak of the "disasters" which the French Revolution produced upon the *Continent*. Bishop, why did you take so wide a sweep? The Continent is an immense tract. Why did not you confine yourself to *France*? That was the country whose Revolution you were talking about; but, for some reason or other, you did not choose to point to the "disasters" which France had experienced from that Revolution. That Revolution is over, Father in God: France has got her Bourbon King again upon the throne: France has again got a nobility: France has again got a clergy, at the head of whom is again that Pope which our parsons always told us was Anti-Christ. But now mark me, Bishop, the King of France cannot now shut up people in a Bastille; he cannot now lay on taxes at his pleasure; he cannot now destroy liberty and life when he chooses. There are two Houses of Par-

liament in France, one of which is chosen, not, indeed, by the people at large; but, still, chosen by the people and not by an aristocracy. It is not a sham representation of the people but a real one.

In addition to this "disastrous" change, the cruel taxing laws, and the more than hellish game laws, no longer exist except in the minds of a generation that have to thank the virtue of their fathers, who swept them away. Do you know, Bishop, that the cruel laws relative to salt, and the savage laws relative to the game, sent thousands of poor creatures annually to the galleys and the gallows. It is a "disaster" indeed, to be freed from these, and to have regular Courts of Justice, regular Judges of Assize; trial by Jury, and a real Act of Habeas Corpus, in exchange for those profligate and corrupt Parliaments, and those pillaging and murderous petty tribunals, that rendered the life of man, if he did not belong to the Noblesse or the Clergy, as little safe as the life of a dog or a cat!

Another "disaster" which has befallen revolutionized France, is, the more equal distribution of real property; the multiplication of farms and farm-houses, the in-



dependence of the occupiers of the land, their ease and comfort, and the consequent "*destruction*" of innumerable swarms of beggars prowling about in idleness, covered with rags and infested with vermin. But the great "*disaster*" of all, which unhappy France has brought upon herself by her Revolution; by that "*dreadful event*;" by that shock to her "*institutions civil and religious*:" the great "*disaster*" of all, which she has had and still has to suffer under, and which I have hardly nerves to mention, is, the *abolition of tithes*, and the complete confiscation, sale, and appropriation to *national uses of the whole of the immense property of her Church!*

How she, under the pressure of this "*disaster*," continues to exist at all is astonishing. The newspapers that we daily receive from France, the travellers that daily arrive from her shores; certain treaties that we have with her, especially about the Slave-Trade, and her mockery at our remonstrances on account of her setting that treaty at defiance: these and other circumstances prove clearly that she is in existence; or, one would be inclined to doubt the fact of her having been able to survive the

tremendous "*disaster*" mentioned in the last paragraph, which I am ready to confess, was brought upon her solely by that "*dreadful event*," from the like of which, you say our parsons *preserved* us.

*Courage*, then, as the French themselves say; courage, Bishop! We find that that event, though so "*dreadful*," has not absolutely annihilated France. And, now, as we have seen what her "*disasters*" are, we will, if you please, turn to our own happy situation, and see what our "*preservation*" has yielded us. You say, that we have been preserved from "*destruction*." "*Destruction*" means, to put an end to; to kill; to lay waste; to bring to nought; or, rather, it means the state in which the performance of these acts places the performance or thing. Now, to be sure, we are not actually brought to an end. The people of the country are alive in as great numbers as usual, except those that have recently died of starvation in Ireland; or have been hanged there, for (amongst other things) killing or maltreating *tithe-proctors*. The Marquis of Wellesley in his despatches sent home last Spring, traces several of the riotings, fightings and killings, to the hostility between the people and the

*tithe-proctors.* All the killed on both sides, upon these occasions, and all that have been hanged in consequence of the riots and fights and violences, together with all those that have been starved to death in the same districts, may be fairly said to have been *destroyed*, and this I think you will not be disposed to deny. Those landlords and farmers, in England, who have shot themselves or cut their throats, on account of the loss of their estates or capital (and such are not a few in number) may, with equal fairness, I think, be said to have come to "*destruction*." Those that have been brought to insolvency, and whose families are comfortably lodged in the Workhouse, must, I think, be regarded as being, at least, *half-destroyed*.

With these exceptions, we have, I grant you, been preserved from "*destruction*;" but, Bishop, when you say, "the immediate danger is now passed," do you forget, that wheat is selling at four shillings a bushel, and that there are sixty millions of taxes collected every year, besides six millions in poor rates? Can you possibly forget this; and if you do not forget this; and if when you are talking about the

country being preserved from "*destruction*," you mean, its having been preserved from a *great change*, do you imagine, Bishop, that there must not be a *great change*, of some sort or other? Do you imagine that these sixty millions of taxes and six millions of poor rates, and *rents and tithes* into the bargain, and *quit rents and fines*, are all to be paid with wheat at four shillings a bushel; do you mean that no rents are to be paid? And if you mean that rents are to be paid, who do you think is to pay the debt, and the "*dead weight*" and the army and Whitehall, and the tithes? You talk about the influence of the "*writings*" of the parsons. This is an odd word to make use of upon such an occasion; especially as you had said just before that the learning and piety of the parsons had an influence on the minds of the people, "*not only* through the medium of their "*pastoral functions*." It is after this that come the words, "*but by the effect of their writings*." That is to say, then, writings other than those which they put forth in their quality of parsons. Other writings than those about religion. And, now, I do remember me that the Right Reverend Father in God, HERBERT MARSH, now Lord Bi-

shop of Peterborough, who so elegantly translated for the use of the House of Lords, and to *further the ends of justice*, a most critical passage in the evidence of *Barbara Krantz*: I do remember me, that this reverend person did put forth a "*writing*," vulgarly called a *Pamphlet*, in the year 1800, entitled "*FRENCH AGGRESSION*," in which the reverend person maintained the justice and necessity of the war then carrying on against the people of France. And I do remember me that that reverend person, had, in the month of May 1804, a pension settled upon him of five hundred and odd pounds a-year, which according to a return laid before the House of Commons, he enjoyed in 1808, and may, for ought I know to the contrary, enjoy to this day.

This is the sort of writings, I suppose, that you allude to; and in this way, the parsons, it must be confessed, endeavoured at least to obtain an influence over the minds of the people, though I have no scruple to say that *Bate Dudley* did a thousand times more in one day at the head of a detachment of Dragoons than the whole of the political scribbling parsons have done for the last fifty years towards preserving what you call the "*country*," from what you call "*destruction*." But, if their "*writings*" be so efficacious, let the heroes *now* draw forth their pens. Let them *now*, if they have influence over the *minds* of the people: let them *now* persuade the English landlords to be content *without rents*, and the Irish labourers to be content *without food*. Let them show us that it is a good state of

things, when the House of Commons is voting money to keep the Irish from starving, while the Ministers declare that the distress of the country arises from an over-production of food! Let some new rising and aspiring HERBERT MARSH convince us that the danger is past, and that we have nothing but distant dangers to apprehend, when we have a debt including "*dead weight*" and poor rates, of *more than a thousand millions*, and when the Ministers declare, that, to reduce this debt is to make a Revolution.

Be this their task. Let their sublime, their clerical pens be employed in this way. Let them make a draft of this kind upon those rich mines of knowledge, those "*seminaries for the education of youth*," about which you make such a bragging. We will excuse them from that of which you make a positive demand, namely, the *keeping so far a-head of us* in intellectual endowments. We will be content, as far as relates to their political "*writings*," if they will but show us how the interest of the debt is to be paid, with wheat at four shillings a bushel without a cessation of rents, and if they would add to the obligation, do, pray, let them show us, how it can be just, how it can be reasonable, for tithes to be paid, for the Church to enjoy one farthing's worth of property, while *rents are unpaid*, or while the interest of the *debt is reduced*.

If their "*learning*" is to take a pious turn; if, bidding adieu to the sports of the field and the recreation of places of fashionable resort, they are bent upon the care of our souls, we will still excuse them from surpassing the

Dissenters in learning and piety. We shall be quite content if they will but do as you say, "overcome evil with good;" and treat the "*gainsayer with kindness*," treat him with "*courtesy and friendliness*;" guard the flock *themselves*; and not leave the business to Attorneys' General, to Vice Societies, and Bridge-street Associations. If they will but use the word, meet those whom they call "*infidels*" with that; triumph over them, or endeavour to do it, by *argument*, and not by the *force of the law*, we will readily excuse them from attaining that superiority in learning and talent, the necessity of which you so strongly enforce. One thing more, and that is all that we either wish for or ask for at their hands; namely, let them show us how it is consistent with the Christian religion, or with the laws of the land, that many of them should be receiving half-pay as officers of the army or the navy; how they should be receiving this, as a *remuneration for future services*, after they have declared at the altar, that they believe themselves *influenced by the Holy Ghost*, to take upon them the ministration of the Gospel; and after they know that the laws of the Church, into which they have entered, as well as the laws of the land in which they live, *render it impossible for them ever to serve as officers again*.

Thus have I examined your Charge. In giving that charge, you doubtless expected no answer to it. I had a right to give this answer, and in giving it, while I have performed my duty towards the public, I may, perhaps, have bestowed on you the benefit

of a caution, how you, in the delivery of charges to your clergy, meddle with politics again; and particularly with politics relating to the late ruinous war, and the French Revolution.

WM. COBBETT.

#### MR. COKE.

WE shortly noticed, some days ago, a pamphlet, published at HOLT in Norfolk, by Mr. E. H. GIBBS, relative to the conduct of Mr. COKE with regard to the *letting of a farm*. A brief statement of the case is necessary, before we submit any remarks to the judgment of our readers.

Mr. GIBBS holds a farm of Mr. COKE, the lease of which expires at Michaelmas 1823. Mr. GIBBS, from considerations not material to the case, wished to quit the farm a year sooner; that is to say, at the Michaelmas just now at hand. As the occupying tenant, he might, if he had chosen to remain, have had, according to the invariable custom, another lease, in preference to any other tenant at the same rent; that is to say, he, Mr. GIBBS, was entitled to what is called the *forsaking*, or the *refusal*, of the farm, the landlord fixing the rent, of course. It was *worth something*, therefore, to be placed, in this case, in Mr. GIBBS's shoes. It was his business to get something for resigning his right to this preference. He had laid out, during the last 12 or 14 years, a great deal of money in *improving the buildings of the farm*; and he naturally wished to get something, in the way of *remuneration for this*, from the person into whose

hands he should put the right of preference as tenant, and who would, of course, *enjoy the benefit of these improvements.*

In July, therefore, Mr. GIBBS looked out for a person to succeed him. His first business was to agree with this person as to the *amount of the remuneration*; his next was to get this person *accepted as a tenant by Mr. Coke.* The person who offered himself to Mr. GIBBS was a Mr. MOORE first; and afterwards a Mr. RODWELL offered. Mr. GIBBS asked 500*l.* as a remuneration from his intended successor. Nothing about the bargain between the tenants was to be said to the landlord, *until the tenants had come to an agreement.* This was an essential preliminary in the negotiation. And, accordingly, when Mr. MOORE entered on the negotiation *he promised not to mention the matter to any but certain persons of his own family.*

The negotiation between Mr. GIBBS and Mr. MOORE broke off, on the latter declining to give the sum demanded by the former; but, upon the breaking off of the negotiation, MOORE declared, in a very solemn manner, that he had *kept his word* as to keeping the subject of the negotiation a secret. But, while he was making these promises; at the very time that he was making this declaration, in so solemn a manner, he (this TUTTELL MOORE) had, as Mr. GIBBS states in his pamphlet, actually been with Mr. COKE and *obtained a promise of the farm in 1823, without, of course, giving Mr. GIBBS a farthing!*

Mr. GIBBS, not suspecting any thing of this sort, proceeded, when

he had broken off with MOORE, to negotiate with another person; and a Mr. RODWELL, a person whom it appears Mr. COKE did not object to as a tenant, *agreed to give Mr. GIBBS the 500*l.** The agreement having been made, the parties went to Mr. COKE, in order to obtain his *acceptance of Mr. RODWELL as a tenant*; when, to their astonishment, they found, that MOORE had been with him, told him of the negotiation under hand, and had actually *got a promise to have the farm in 1823.*

The *breach of promise* on the part of MOORE appeared to have been fully explained and *clearly proved* to Mr. COKE; yet, he *adhered to his promise* to MOORE, though that promise was obtained in so scandalous a manner; and, though, by adhering to it, 500*l.* were clearly taken unjustly from Mr. GIBBS. It appears from Mr. GIBBS's pamphlet that Mr. COKE says, that MOORE's breach of promise was *nothing to him*; but, it unfortunately happens, that it is but too manifestly for the *interest* of Mr. COKE, that the *incoming* tenant should keep the 500*l.* instead of giving it to the *outgoing* tenant. Whatever the latter gave to the former would, of course, reduce the means of the coming-in tenant; make him have less capital to lose; and make him have less money to hand over to Mr. COKE.

It is impossible to disguise the real motive here. It is too plain to admit of but this one explanation. The promise made to MOORE was no more binding than would be a bargain to pay so much for goods to one who had stolen them, after you had discovered them to have been stolen, and after you had



discovered the real owner. Will any man say, that such a bargain would be binding in honour? The presumption really is, if we take all the circumstances into view, that MOORE and Mr. COKE made their bargain for the express purpose of keeping from Mr. GIBBS the 500*l.* One of the two things *must* have been. MOORE must have communicated all the circumstances to Mr. COKE; or he did not. If he *did not*, then the promise he obtained was obtained by a fraud on both the parties. If he *did*, then Mr. COKE took his full part with, in short, joined with MOORE to keep the 500*l.* from his old tenant, that 500*l.* being, let it be borne in mind, intended as a remuneration in part for the great improvements in the buildings that were for ever Mr. COKE's!

Now, can any man doubt of the *motive* here? Mr. RODWELL was as eligible a tenant as MOORE. Why should Mr. COKE prefer the latter before the former, except that he thereby kept 500*l.* in the pocket of one who was going to be his constant debtor? What *other* motive could he have? For, it is too much to suppose that he had a *taste* for a tenant like MOORE! MOORE had, at any rate, been guilty of a most scandalous breach of his word with Mr. GIBBS. This must have been known to Mr. COKE. Nay, the *proof* of it was produced to him in an *affidavit*. In short, he did know it; and does it happen, that honourable men *prefer* such parties to others of a totally opposite character?

It has given us great pain to make these remarks; but, having, some months ago, held Mr. COKE

forth to the public as "*the best landlord in England*," we could not, upon seeing Mr. GIBBS's pamphlet, think that we were acting justly towards that public, unless we noticed that which we must deem, at the very least, to have been a most *ungenerous proceeding*. As to MOORE, he would have been beneath our notice. He is unknown to the public. It is not thus with regard to Mr. COKE; though we must say, that, if proof had been wanted, that meanness can be as much at home in the lofty mansion as in the huckster's shed, we have that proof now before us.

### SPEECH OF MR. FAWKES,

AT THE MEETING AT YORK, ON THE  
22ND AUGUST, CONVENED

"To consider of the most efficient  
future means of forwarding the great  
cause of Parliamentary Reform."

GENTLEMEN,

BEFORE I enter upon the important business of this day—before I have the honour of submitting to your consideration the great object of your attachment and hopes, you must allow me to apologize to you for the peculiar part I bear in the transaction; you must permit me to enter into some explanation of that conduct which has brought you together—conduct, which many who do not know me may have attributed to arrogance and presumption, while others have unhesitatingly referred it to a deliberate, to a wanton, unnecessary, ill-timed intention on my part to disturb the peace of the county.

When I consider, Gentlemen, the magnitude of the county of York, and call to my recollection

the great and glorious part it acted on a former occasion, I must confess I have been surprised that this great question has not been sooner submitted to your attention; especially when it appears again to have presented itself to the people of this country, as the only means of extrication from the dangers and difficulties with which they are beset and surrounded; when several of the counties have already declared in its favour; and when thousands are converted to a sense of its necessity, who only a very short time ago were decidedly and actively hostile to it. (Hear, hear.)

—Under these circumstances, when I called to mind the earlier years of my public life—when those moments presented themselves to me, during which I advocated this great cause in this place with many of those who are now taken from us—especially with one, whose name ought never to be mentioned when this subject is discussed, but in terms of honour, reverence, and gratitude—the upright, the enlightened, the patriotic, the lamented father of a gentleman and friend now in my eye, who, I am proud to say, inherits all those valuable feelings for which the late Mr. WYVILL was so highly distinguished; when I compared the exertions, feeble though they might be, which I did not hesitate to make at that time, under circumstances far less auspicious, with my present supineness, my indifference to the cause accused me, I felt it deeply, and under that impression I grew restless and impatient; I felt that I should not be doing my duty if I did not make one more effort in its behalf. I made up my mind in consequence, to make one more appeal to my countrymen; to struggle, as well as I could, through that torrent of odium, obloquy, misrepresentation, and personal abuse, into which I was conscious such a determination on my part would inevitably plunge me, again

to invite to this place all, who I presumed still cherished an attachment to the good cause; again to appear among you, and again, in your presence, to unfold the proud and constitutional standard of Parliamentary Reform. These were the grounds, Gentlemen, of my late invitation to you; these were my motives—motives prompted solely by a conviction impressed indelibly on my mind, of the absolute necessity of infusing a larger proportion of popular influence into that assembly, on the proper construction of which the liberties, the lives, and the property of the people of England entirely depend. —(Hear, hear.)

It has been objected to us with an air of confidence and triumph, Why agitate the county at present? Why bring forward this stale subject again? Why pester us afresh with the subject of Parliamentary Reform? a subject which has never been brought forward but to be refuted; one which was at rest, and ought not to have been disturbed. Why attempt to drag it from that obscurity, to which the irrefragable arguments of its opponents have everlastingly consigned it? Where the record of this proud achievement is to be found, I must confess I am totally ignorant. Are we to look for it in the almost unanimous opinions in its favour, of every statesman who has distinguished himself in the service of his country since the æra of the Restoration? Shall we find it in that petition of the Friends of the People, which does now, and has so long lain unanswered, on the table of the House of Commons? or in the Resolutions of the Yorkshire Association, in which nearly four hundred of the leading Gentlemen in the county of York declared their conviction of its necessity; and in which, in a true spirit of prophecy, they predicted the evils which would ensue from its non-adop-

tion; which evils and misery are now staring us fully in the face? Or is it demonstrated in the hostility of the pensioner and the sinecurist, the minister, the placeman, and the boroughmonger? However, if such be the situation of our cause, the sooner its friends release it from its confinement the better. And as I am asked why I choose this peculiar moment to agitate the question; my answer must be found, must be read, and, methinks, in characters sufficiently intelligible, in the alarming, in the unprecedented state of the country; in the acts and language of the last Session of Parliament; in the actual misery in the midst of plenty, of one part of the empire, and the gloomy anticipations of the other; in the starvation of Ireland, and the impending ruin of more than one class in England:—in the expenditure of nearly one billion and a half of the public treasure in twenty-nine years; a million a-week for the same period, and 200,000 for every working-day; a sum so enormous, that the human mind absolutely recoils from the calculation of it:—in a consequent overwhelming debt, the interest of which *cannot be much longer paid*, without the risk of a national convulsion; unless some arrangement be made satisfactory to the public creditor and debtor; an arrangement *which for obvious reasons cannot, which ought not, and which, I trust, never will be made, without a Reform of the Parliament*: (Hear, hear.)—in the master mischief, not so much the influence of the Crown, as the dominant ascendancy of the oligarchy in the House of Commons, the unconstitutional power of the Borough-proprietors;—that predominant influence, to which those who have steadily observed the conduct of Parliament have reasonably and justly attributed the evils the country has endured, is enduring, and is still likely to endure:—in

that curious and important document, which has lately made its appearance—the Report made to the House of Commons by one of its own Committees, respecting so many of its Members as hold places and offices under the Crown; which goes, in a great way, to confirm the Reformers' opinions, and that on the Parliament's own showing, which proves, that one hundred and nine Members of the House receive 209,843 l., exclusive of the *enormous fees of office*, from that purse, of which they are the constitutional guardians; while an analysis of this list shows, that this sum is divided among those who are either directly nominated by Borough proprietors, or closely connected with them: (Hear, hear.)—in that alliance, falsely and impiously called holy, which has made the once liberal Britain the ally of despots, and the enemy of the cause of freedom all over the world:—in an undeviating system of coercion, restraint, and severity towards the people, and a marked neglect of their wishes and petitions:—finally, Gentlemen, in a system directed by all that contradiction, vacillation, intolerance, profusion, and corruption, of which we have been of late the helpless and unfortunate witnesses. Gentlemen, these are reasons quite sufficient, I humbly conceive, to justify the step I have taken; but as I have been accused of an ill-timed exertion, I will add one reason more—the present tranquillity of the country—the very season every statesman would prefer, when no enemy presses from without, and there is no apprehension of any disturbance within, to discuss great national reformatations, amendments, and changes. (Hear, hear.)

Gentlemen, when nations find themselves in difficulties and dangers, they look, of course, for relief from the collective wisdom of the country. To our energy and

talent, in Parliament assembled, we have been directing our anxious attention for the last six months, and have we not reason to say that we have been most grievously disappointed?—for what has been done for our relief? Comparatively nothing! while doctrines have been broached, cheered, and maintained, directly contravening those fundamental laws, which our forefathers cherished, which they established by their perseverance, and cemented by their blood—which they left as a protection against tyranny and extortion, as their last, their best, and most invaluable legacy. (Hear, hear.) To establish this point it will not be necessary for me to bewilder you or myself in the mazes of antiquarian research: I have no wish or occasion to go back one hour beyond the Revolution—that Revolution which we have all, from our cradle, been taught to consider as glorious and necessary—that Revolution, the centenary of which was celebrated only a few years ago, with all the “pomp, pride, and circumstance” of public rejoicing. What would the authors of that great measure have thought, had they heard the doctrines of the present hour? Would it not have made them start from their seats with indignation and astonishment?

Gentlemen, during the most corrupt periods of the olden time, public liberty had mouth honour at the least. It was reserved for these days to hear Members of that Assembly, peculiarly and emphatically called the Commons' Chamber, declare it as their opinion, not by innuendo, but gravely and deliberately advancing it as the chosen champions of anti-reform, that “it is essential to the perfection of a representative body, that it should not be identified with, but chosen for the people.”—(Mr. Canning's opinion.) And that it is a *signal merit* in the

British House of Commons that it does not amount to a *direct delegation from the people*. (Hear, hear.)

Now, Gentlemen, I must say, that if you are not prepared to consider all the numerous laws which have been enacted to secure the purity of Parliament, and to render it, as near as it is possible, the reflection of the public mind, as having had their source in ignorance and dotage,—if you are not ready to stand by, and see the Bill of Rights cast into the fire as a bundle of waste paper, it is your duty to denounce such opinions as novel, dangerous, and unconstitutional!

There did once exist an unmutated instrument, called the Act of Settlement, which provided that no placeman should be returnable to the House of Commons (Hear, hear); but what is the modern doctrine, forsooth? Why, that useless places are necessary to maintain the King on his throne, and the constitution in existence. (Hear, hear.) And this assertion is made when the influence of the Crown is ten times greater than it was when Mr. Burke knocked off 70,000*l.* a-year from it at one blow;—it is made at a moment when, though 2,500*l.* a-year could not be spared in the House of Commons, Ministers did not hesitate to take 30,000*l.* from their Sovereign. But are the gentlemen who advocate this doctrine aware of the consequences that flow from it? How can any system be considered as more radically vicious?—how can the necessity of Reform be more solidly established?—for if it be correct, does it not follow that our King, that the King of England cannot sit securely on his throne without the aid of corruption?—that he cannot exercise the high prerogatives with which the Constitution has invested him, without bribing and corrupting the Representatives of his people? (Hear, hear.) Is it not at once admitting, that the Members



of the House of Commons, at least a majority of them, are so lost to all decency and shame; that they would, at the very least, obstruct the conduct of public affairs, if they were not kept to their duty, by the acceptance or expectation of honours and emoluments? (Hear, hear.)

There was a time, it appears, when taxation was considered with unusual horror and dread, for no evils, says the old adage, are certain, in this transitory life, but taxation and death. But, Gentlemen, how differently are we now taught to look at what once we thought a curse? One gravely says, that "to remit taxation would only aggravate distress;" another, that "the proposal to take off taxes is worse than unavailing, that it is delusive, since it goes to controvert the great order of nature;" while a third proclaims that taxation ought to be considered as one of the dispensations of Providence. To a people taxed as we are this is going pretty far in the way of insult and nonsense; however, urge what we may, under the present system, there is no escape from this new providential interference: if we grumble, they call it "an ignorant impatience;" if we lie down in silence and despair, they avow that we are contented.—(A laugh.)

There was a time, Gentlemen, when a standing army was an object of jealousy, and not, as now, considered essential to the preservation of our liberties. There was a time, when knowledge was regarded as the source of power, bringing strength and wealth, and virtue and order, in its train; it was reserved for these days to regard it as a power of evil, not of good—as a nuisance—a counter-acting principle to Government—to be combatted and crushed by means of venality and corruption. (Hear.) It was reserved for these days to hear the Ministers of the Crown declare, with impunity, to

the people, "That if petitioners came to treat the House with contempt, they would make each of them feel that there was power enough in the executive Government to treat them as they deserved." (Hear, hear.) Now I ask, would any man have presumed to hold this language in a House of Commons really chosen by the people? Would such an assembly have borne that the Ministers of the Crown should talk to them of the executive Government punishing each, and even one of the people, for using words which they might choose to consider as contemptuous? (Hear.)

Gentlemen, I have not intended to exaggerate, and I am conscious I have "set down nothing in malice."

"Who's in or out, who guides the State machine,

Not moves my curiosity or spleen,"

provided I feel that my country is free, safe, and contented. (Hear, hear.)

Scarcely one who hears me but must feel himself insulted, when he is told that the Constitution under which he at present lives is "the envy and admiration of surrounding nations." No one but must have a certain misgiving, that in the novel doctrine to which I have alluded, lurks not some bold and bad design to preserve the forms of freedom, and to rule for the future without responsibility and without control. No one but must sensibly feel, that it is not that admirable plan of civil polity, under which our ancestors intended we should live.

No, no, Gentlemen, the domination under which we are sinking has nothing to do with the genuine principles of the British Constitution. It was created by fraud, perjury, bribery, and corruption. It was the child of the Septennial Bill—it was nursed by Walpole—it attained to giant strength under the Pelhams. It has increased, is



increasing, and if it be not diminished by the means we seek, must render the power of the Oligarchy paramount in that assembly, to interpose in the privileges of which, by interfering in their elections, is still considered by law a heinous crime against the rights and liberties of the Commons of England.

Gentlemen, how those evils upon which I have thus slightly touched, past, present, and in prospect, are to be removed, save through the medium of a Parliamentary Reform, I must own I cannot divine. Ministers and their majorities, swayed by reasons I leave you to guess, appear to have set their face against all financial arrangements, and all future retrenchment. We cannot at present remove Ministers or reform their majorities; the present system, therefore, unless this great change can be effected, must go on, and in that case what has one great portion of the community to look for but the approach of intolerable distress? What has the whole empire to dread less than all the hazards and horrors of some national convulsion?

If I am asked, Gentlemen, what description of Members I seek and expect from Parliamentary Reform, I answer, such as would acknowledge, and ever act upon, the great principles established at the great arrangement to which I have so often alluded; who would consider our Government to be composed of three estates, one checking the other:—First, a King clothed with all the splendour requisite to give dignity to his exalted situation, and armed with every prerogative necessary to conduct the affairs of the country with energy and promptitude; but still strictly limited by the law;—a King with whom, when he mounts the throne, the most sacred of all compacts is made—to whom, with his sceptre, the most important of all trusts is confided—and by whom, when they surrender themselves to his keeping,

it is expected by his subjects that certain conditions shall be performed and respected. Secondly, a House of Lords, a patrician body—a deliberative, and as it were, balancing power between the Crown and the people, to protect the crown against the people, should faction ever prevail—to protect the people against the crown, should timidity or subserviency ever sway the votes of their elected Representatives. An Aristocracy, splendid but useful, contented, however, without interfering with the rights of the people, with its own large and peculiar privileges, not claiming as a right what was, and is still considered a crime. Thirdly, a House of Commons chosen according to the principles laid down by Sir E. Coke, which I quoted in my Address—a House of Commons feelingly sympathizing with the people in the enactment of every law, the grant of every supply, the removal of every grievance, and the correction of every abuse.—

(Hear, hear.) Men who would at all times prefer the interest of their country to their own views, or those of their patron; who could not be persuaded that immoderate taxation was a dispensation of Providence, who would neither obey the call, or crouch under the menace of a Minister; who would consider that “the King of England cannot have so perfect, so honourable a security for every thing that makes a King truly great and truly happy, as in the genuine, free, and natural support of an uninfluenced and independent House of Commons.”—(Hear, hear.)

Gentlemen, on quitting this part of the subject, allow me to caution you in the manly and glowing language of the noble author of ‘The patriot King!’

“If liberty be the delicious and wholesome fruit upon which you are anxious to feed, the British Constitution is the tree which

"has borne this fruit, and which  
 "will continue to bear it upon cer-  
 "tain conditions. It will furnish  
 "you with this aliment—if you on  
 "your parts will fence it in, and  
 "trench it round, against the  
 "beasts of the field and the in-  
 "sects of the earth; the former,  
 "the beasts of the field, are the  
 "open and avowed advocates of  
 "Prerogative; the latter, like  
 "other insects sprung from dirt,  
 "and the vilest of the animal kind,  
 "are the nibbling and poisonous  
 "agents of corruption and depen-  
 "dency."—(Hear, hear.)

It is not my intention to offer, in your presence, any arguments in answer to the objections which have been raised to Parliamentary Reform—for what would it be? a waste of words as respects myself, and towards you an insult to your conviction.

Of virtual representation—of the dangers incident to the change and reform we propose—of the apprehensions entertained of a more popular assembly—of the worthless argument "let well alone"—of the most dangerous position, that it is necessary that the King's servants should command a majority in the House of Commons—of vested rights and rotten boroughs—of decayed trees, crumbling walls, and venerable pigsties—it may be my lot to speak on some future occasion.—Should any such opportunity occur, before those who are satisfied with such absurd and dangerous anomalies I shall throw down my gauntlet, without reserve and without apprehension.

Gentlemen,—I have now endeavoured to explain to you the reasons which induced me to call you together: it is for you to decide whether you consider me justified in the step I have taken.—(Hear, hear.)—As far as regards my own feelings, I am confident I shall never regret it, for I have done what I conceived to be my duty. In these dark and perilous moments,

I have given every one an opportunity of coming forward who has any faith in the operation of Parliamentary Reform, and I have exonerated myself from the charge, whether made internally or externally, of indifference to that cause, which I have supported during the whole of my public life with sincerity.

In taking my leave of you for the present, allow me to indulge an anxious hope that it is to the agent, and not to the cause, that so much indifference has been shown. That its adoption may not be delayed till that moment, when those who turn a deaf ear to us will be "feelingly persuaded," that prevention is at all times easier than cure, till that moment of ruin, despair, and convulsion, when all precaution will be useless, and all human wisdom and public virtue of no avail!

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### THE MARKETS.

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It is my intention to insert, in the Register, every week, an account of the London Markets, as far as relates to *Corn, Meat, Cheese, and Butter*. I may, sometimes, notice, under this head, prices in the country. But, I shall regularly give an account of the prices of *Corn in England*, according to the *Gazette*; the prices at *Mark Lane* on the preceding Monday; the prices of *Meat at Smithfield*; the prices by the dead carcass at *Newgate Market*; and the prices of *Bacon, Butter and Cheese*, in the City. I have been induced to do this, first, to comply with the request of several of my Readers in the country; and, second, that we may have on record facts now

become of so much importance in a political point of view; facts, indeed, upon which all the principal measures of the Parliament, when it shall again assemble, must unavoidably turn.

### CORN IN ENGLAND.

**AVERAGE PRICES OF CORN,**  
*For the Week ended August 31, being the THIRD of the SIX succeeding August 15.*

#### Per Quarter.

	s.	d.
Wheat.....	38	9
Rye.....	19	11
Barley.....	19	8
Oats.....	17	4
Beans.....	23	9
Pease.....	24	5

#### MARK LANE.

#### Average per Quarter.

	s.	d.
Wheat.....	39	7
Barley.....	19	4
Oats.....	18	8
Rye.....	17	9
Beans.....	23	6
Pease.....	25	2

#### SMITHFIELD (alive.)

#### Per Stone of 8 pounds.

	s.	d.	s.	d.
Beef.....	2	8	to	3 4
Mutton.....	2	8	—	3 0
Veal.....	4	0	—	5 0
Pork.....	2	6	—	3 4
Lamb.....	3	0	—	3 4

#### NEWGATE (dead.)

	s.	d.	s.	d.
Beef.....	2	0	to	2 10
Mutton.....	2	0	—	2 6
Veal.....	3	0	—	4 4
Pork.....	2	4	—	3 8
Lamb.....	2	8	—	3 4

#### BACON, BUTTER AND CHEESE.

#### Per Hundred Weight.

**BACON**—30s. to 32s. for the best, small sized.—25s. to 28s. for middling and heavy.

**BUTTER**—first Waterford 74s. to 75s.—Carlow, 80s.—Dorset, 42s. to 44s. per firkin of 56lbs.

**CHEESE**—Cheshire, 60s. to 74s.—Old Derby, 52s. to 56s.—New Derby (pale) 42s. to 44s.; (coloured) 44s. to 48s.—New Double Gloucester, 46s. to 48s.; Single (the best) 44s. to 46s.; Middling, 35s. to 40s.

#### MEAT IN THE COUNTRY.

*Bristol, Sept. 5.*—Beef from 3½d. to 4½d.; Mutton 3d. to 3½d.; and Pork 3d. to 3½d. per lb. sinking offal.—*Mutton, Sept. 7.*—Meat in the shambles:—Beef 3½d. to 4d.; Mutton 3½d. to 4d.; Lamb 3d. to 4d.; and Veal 5d. to 6½d. per lb. Fresh Butter 9d. to 11d. per lb.; Salt ditto, 37s. per firkin.